

# Life Skills Ties

## Domain: Systems Thinking

Level: 5-12

### Production Circle



Materials Needed: 1-6 tennis balls

Time Allocation 5-10 minutes

Group everyone in a large circle. Assign them to all raise their hands. Give a ball to one of them and tell him he may throw the ball to any other player in the circle, except the person next to him. The person receiving the ball must catch it, then throw it to another. He may then put his hand down. Continue this until everyone has touched the ball. Players should remember who tossed the ball to them and who they threw the ball to. Repeat the procedure and time it, explaining to the group that each time the ball hits the ground, 5 seconds will be added to the total time. Now remove 3 or 4 players who are "sick". Before going have them explain their assignments to a person next to them. Then start the ball moving, explaining that the same production will be expected, even though there are sick employees. Now have the sick employees join the circle again. This time increase production by telling the group they are to process 5 balls as quickly as possible. Give all five to the first player and let him start them at will. Remind the group of the 5 second penalty rule. For variation, use different object, such as bean bags, small stuffed animals, different kinds of balls or other soft objects. Also ask each participant to say the name of the person he is throwing to.

#### Questions:

Why is it important to divide up the work?

Could the system have worked any more efficiently?

Why do systems sometimes fail?

